



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Patricia Jursik, 8th District

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STATE MUST PRESERVE 794 FREEWAY CONNECTION TO SOUTH SHORE

Milwaukee, WI – Just as many of us plant our summer flowers and water our gardens, we know that we will also have the unpleasant job of weeding. And like these weeds, this will be our second summer when we will have to deal with those that have an agenda to remove the Hoan Bridge, a bridge named for former Milwaukee Mayor Daniel Hoan who had the vision of connecting the north and south sides of our great City and County.

While many of us enjoy summer festivals under this great arch, Alderman Bauman of Milwaukee plans to introduce a Common Council resolution in July asking the State to build a new, smaller Hoan Bridge that is only 40 feet tall, compared to the current 125-foot-tall freeway. Such a bridge would of course require a lift bridge or other device to permit shipping to enter our ports.

The Hoan Bridge has itself become part of the landscape of our City on the lake; this arch is our grand entry hall to the Milwaukee Art Museum Calatrava wing. The Hoan is a young bridge that has many years remaining in its mighty life expectancy. There is an agenda being floated by some to change course before this bridge can be re-decked for its next two decades of life.

At the County level, I have requested that the County Board's Transportation and Public Works Committee schedule this item on our September calendar to address these objectives. After all, it is Milwaukee County, not the City, which services the Hoan. I hope my colleagues on the Board hear from our citizens on the importance of maintaining the Hoan. For my part, I have already indicated that I will not support selling county land for expansion of the Zoo Interchange until our current assets, like the Hoan Bridge, are maintained.

Our South Shore communities have experienced billions of dollars of development since the Hoan Bridge was built. I have received from the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) a footprint for the extension of the 794 freeway to Ryan Road, and am now calling on the Department of Transportation to discontinue studies on demolition of the bridge and instead begin to fund the completion of this South Shore asset.

If the state wants to know where it can get funds to pay for the re-decking of the bridge and the extension of the 794 freeway, it can come from a toll road from the Wisconsin/Illinois state line to the County line. My constituents understand the need to collect money from snow birds that earned their pensions here but no longer pay state taxes and only return to enjoy our parks and festivals. Many of these individuals visit Milwaukee County from places that already charge tolls to tourists from Wisconsin.

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